



PRELIMINARY REPORT

HIGHWAY

HWY14FH002

The information in this report is preliminary and will be supplemented or corrected during the course of the investigation.

About 7:45 p.m. (local time), on Monday, January 27, 2014, a 2000 Volvo truck-tractor in combination with an intermodal chassis and container semitrailer became disabled in the right lane of Interstate 88 (I-88), also referred to as the Ronald Reagan Memorial Tollway, near Naperville, in DuPage County, Illinois. The Volvo combination vehicle had been traveling eastbound when its engine shut down, disabling the vehicle at milepost 122. An Illinois State Toll Highway Authority (ISTHA) 2010 International single-unit flatbed help truck, along with an Illinois State Police (ISP) 2011 Ford Crown Victoria patrol car stopped behind the Volvo combination vehicle to render assistance and to warn oncoming traffic of the blocked lane. Naperville Towing Services was also dispatched to the scene and arrived in a 1991 White Motor Company heavy duty tow truck, which stopped in front of and hooked up to the Volvo combination vehicle. Emergency lights on the responding vehicles included an active arrow board on the ISTHA help truck, and flashing police lights on the ISP patrol car. In addition, flares were placed in the road around the Volvo combination vehicle.

About 9:20 p.m., while the disabled Volvo combination vehicle and responding vehicles were stopped in the right lane of eastbound I-88, a 2004 Freightliner and 2012 East flatbed semitrailer combination vehicle, transporting a load of three steel coils from Nebraska to Illinois, was traveling in the right lane of eastbound on I-88, approaching the stopped vehicles. The driver failed to yield to the stopped vehicles, and collided with them from behind. The Freightliner combination vehicle first collided with the ISP patrol car, pushing it off into the right shoulder and ditch, and then continued forward into the ISTHA help truck, before going off into the right shoulder and ditch itself. During the collision all three steel coils being transported by the Freightliner combination vehicle became detached from the flatbed semitrailer. One of the steel coils made contact with the ISTHA help truck and came to rest in the center lane of I-88. The other two steel coils came to rest in the right ditch, east of the stopped vehicles. The impact caused the ISTHA help truck to collide into the back of the Volvo combination vehicle, which in turn collided into the back of the heavy duty tow truck.

As a result of the accident, a post-crash fire consumed the ISP patrol car and spread to the flatbed semitrailer of the Freightliner combination vehicle, near where the patrol car came to rest. The 39-year-old driver of the ISTHA help truck was fatally injured and the 57-year-old right front passenger in the ISTHA help truck, who was also driver of the disabled Volvo combination vehicle, received minor injuries. The 38-year-old driver of the ISP patrol car was severely burned. Two tow truck operators were outside of the heavy duty tow truck at the time of the accident and were not injured.

The accident occurred in darkness, and there was no roadway lighting in the immediate vicinity. The roadway surface and weather conditions were dry and clear with an air temperature of -8 degrees Fahrenheit and winds out of the west at 12 mph. The temperature with the wind chill factor was estimated at -28 degrees Fahrenheit.

The NTSB is focusing this investigation on issues surrounding both commercial motor carriers involved in this accident. According to the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration's (FMCSA) Safety Measurement System, at the time of the accident, the carrier in operation of the Freightliner combination vehicle, DND International of Naperville, IL, had alerts in 2 of the 5 BASIC categories on which a carrier is measured. An alert indicates to the FMCSA that the carrier exceeds an intervention threshold, and is prioritized for intervention action, based on violations documented during roadside inspections. The alerts for DND International were in the areas of unsafe driving and hours of service compliance. At the time of the accident, the carrier in operation of the Volvo combination vehicle, Michael's Cartage of Bridgeview, IL, had alerts in 4 of the 5 BASIC categories. The alerts for Michael's Cartage were in the areas of unsafe driving, hours of service compliance, driver fitness, and vehicle maintenance.

END OF REPORT